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A
R E V I E W
OF THE
MANUFACTURER'S
COMPLAINTS
AGAINST THE
WOOL GROWER.

PART I.

WHEREIN

Of PITCH and TAR MARKS, the Excess,
the Injury, and *their* respective Re-
medies, are considered minutely.

By the AUTHOR of
MEMOIRS of WOOL.

L O N D O N :

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REVIEW

OF THE

MANUFACTURES

OF THE

Woolen

Manufactures

OF THE

Woolen

Manufactures

OF THE

Woolen

Manufactures

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REVIEW, &c.

AS *Justice* is reciprocally due, not only between Individuals, but each collective Branch of a Community : So in OURS the Woolen Manufacturers have a Title to *Favour* besides. With these Sentiments, and in this Disposition, I sit down to review their *last Year's* Complaints to Parliament, occasioned by *Dearness of Wool* ; which (said they) being a *Temptation to increase the Weight*, produced these bad Effects : 1. *Ex-*
B *cessive*

cessive Marking and Branding with Pitch and Tar. 2. False and deceitful Winding.

The former, a Detriment to Manufacture, and Waste of the Material ; of which, thro' large Demands for *Goods*, there had been Scarcity to a Degree of Want.

The latter, a Fraud, and consequently an Injury to the Buyer.

For *both these* certain Remedies *then* proposed, having not obtained the desired Approbation ; and the Manufacturers remaining on that Account dissatisfied ; it was therefore thought not improper to have the Merits of this Affair calmly discussed in *Writing*. And because WOOL is a Subject on which I had bestowed much Time and Pains in some other Regards, *I was* for that Reason desired, and *am* more inclined to give it a further Consideration under the aforementioned Articles ; adding some Observations on what has been occasionally alleged concerning,

3. *Dear-*

3. *Dearness, and a supposed Want of Wool in this Kingdom of late Years.*

Previous whereto,

I am obliged to take Notice, that while Manufacturers have been *wonderfully* agreed in their Complaints, there has appeared on the Part of Growers, a Diversity of Opinions and Desires ; owing to a Difference of Customs as to the Manner of treating *Sheep* and *Wool* in various Parts of the Kingdom. For all which local Usages the respective Inhabitants have, or think they have their proper substantial Reasons ; and, many of them, that *their own* particular Methods are a perfect Pattern for others.

But it being difficult, in a Manner impossible for any one Person to be either fully informed of those several Usages, or to judge precisely about the Reasons of them ; or what will suit every Place ; I shall therefore confine myself chiefly to *Lincolnshire* ; where I am most conversant, and which is so eminently interested, that a *Rule*, in these

Respects, greatly inconvenient for *that County*, is not, in my humble Opinion, very fit to be made the *Law of England*; especially, since great Parts of several *other Counties* are in the same Circumstances, or nearly so. And in *all these together*, the Wool-Growers, with *their Principals*, are of sufficient Consideration, to merit *some Regard* from the Legislature.

To begin, then, with the Article of

I. *Excessive Marking and Branding with Pitch and Tar.*

I shall first enquire into the *Truth of this Charge*. 2dly, *What are the fittest Expedients in regard thereof, so far as true.*

1st, The *Charge* is, that Pitch and Tar Marks have been encreased and accumulated generally, since the *advanced Price of Wool*, in order to *increase the Weight of the Fleeces*. In consequence whereof (computing by the whole Quantity supposed to grow annually in this Kingdom) there has been estimated

no

no less than* 360,000 *l. per Ann.* Loss to the Public.

But this (whatever may be the Case elsewhere) I see no Reason to admit in the whole, or indeed in any considerable Part, so far as relates to the *County of Lincoln*. For whereas, formerly, branding a Sheep *there*, with Pitch, or Tar, was an universal Practice, many Growers latterly, understanding how obnoxious those Ingredients are to Manufacturers, have wholly disused them; and, in their Place, adopted *Ruddle, Oker*, or the like: So that of Wool without *any* Pitch or Tar-Mark there is no inconsiderable Quantity grown and shorn in *this County*.

But that this new Method of *Marking*, (without the Addition of a *Brand*) can suffice only in *some* Parts of it, and not in *all*, is owing to their different Circumstances in several Regards. To instance in the *Marshes*, one large Tract, not less than *fifty Miles*

* *Reasons, &c. p. 1, 2.*

in length, and abounding with Sheep that produce the best *combing Wool*; Pastures *there*, are not otherwise separated than by Ditches filled with Water; which, when frozen over in hard Weather, become no Fence at all; insomuch that Sheep, of several, for Miles together, are liable to be drove by a *Storm of Snow*, and so intermixed, that, if not branded, Proprietors (who live, many of them, at very distant Habitations) would not be able to reclaim their own. And this Circumstance alone, tho' it happens but at some Times, is a constant good Reason for the Precaution.

Nevertheless, not only in *these Marshes*, but in general, *throughout the County*, where for one Reason or another it is judged necessary, Sheep *fed constantly in Pastures*, and from which arise the greatest Quantities of Wool, far from Excess, are branded very sparingly; and that almost universally at *Sheering only*. To do otherwise, Growers would think a Disparagement to their Stock in Fairs and Markets, as likening them too much to those *fed, some Times at least, on Fens and Commons*, which are ever less esteemed,

teemed, on more Accounts than one ; and, moreover, they know it would be a Disadvantage to the *Sale* of their Wool. And, thus far, I can with great Confidence say, for *Lincolnshire*, that there is *no Excess, no Accumulation* of Marking ; on the contrary, an Abatement of it.

But, with Regard to *Commons*, I dare not undertake to answer in like Manner. In some of these, Sheep are kept in distinct Flocks ; in others, they feed at large. And, of the former, nearly circumstanced alike, some are found to be branded, if not oftener, yet with larger Brands than others ; consequently, it may be imagined, *more* than is absolutely needful ; notwithstanding which, even in Instances of this Kind, upon Enquiry, I have been informed, that it was rather from an Adherence to old Customs, than a new Practice.

And *where*, of all Places, Branding is *most* used, *there*, is a real Necessity for it in some considerable Degree, for the following Reasons :

B 4

First,

First, In *depasturing promiscuously* on very wide extended *Fens* and *Commons*, where a vast Number of Proprietors, from many different *Parishes* and *Towns* have equal Right, for the Sake of being able to distinguish their own in the ordinary Course of Shepherding.

Secondly, To describe them occasionally ; *i. e.* in case of their Straying, or being chased from their Ground, or stolen.

Of this last there is ever most Danger, where is greatest Possibility of the former ; because of *those* Circumstances, Rogues take Advantage, before Owners can satisfy themselves, or almost suspect that their Sheep wanting, are not chased by Accident from their wonted Grounds, or Strayed, but Stolen.

And this strongest of all Reasons, for Branding in a very conspicuous Manner, holds also for *repeating* it oftener than otherwise would be necessary ; in which, tho' the Practice is not uniform, yet is it by
Persons

Persons who have known the Country many Years, judged to be, *for the most Part*, according to antient Custom, and not a novel Usage, *by Reason of the advanced Price of Wool.*

They admit, indeed, that the Buyers cannot know the precise Quantity of Pitch and Tar contained in every Parcel; but say, that besides what their own Eyes may tell them, they cannot but know, both from the *Kind* of Wool, and *Country* where grown, whether it partakes of the greater or lesser Portion of them.

Brands, they confess, *are repeated*; but not generally; nor often, if at all; except upon a Change of Property that makes it necessary; or when the old ones are too far effaced, to distinguish the same.

And notwithstanding that this last will, perhaps, be called *Pretence* only; yet the same Persons assure us, that to act otherwise would, in the very Respect for which *such Repetition* is said to be *intended*, produce either none, or a contrary Effect; for that the
prime

prime Cost of Pitch and Tar, the Waste thereof incurred, and the Value of the Labour bestowed towards and in doing it, with that farther Waste, which Time, after it is done, occasions before Sheering, being put in one Scale, and the Price of *so much* Wool in the other ; the former would go near, at least, to balance the latter, if it did not preponderate.

And therefore, tho' they will not take upon them to affirm, that the Manufacturers Charge of Annoyance on this Head, is in no Shape or Instance true, yet do they deny it in that particular Form and general Manner it has been laid ; being clearly of Opinion, that, upon the whole, the most, and worst to be observed of this Kind, must be construed as done, howsoever injudiciously, yet chiefly out of an abundant Caution ; rather with a View of insuring Property, than for the other Reason assigned.

But this, and the utmost I have said besides, only shewing, so far as relates to *Lincolnshire*, that the Charge of *accumulated Marking* does not hold, either in its *full Extent*,

Extent, or generally, or to any Degree throughout; very far from it. Thence it does not follow that there are not wanting certain Regulations even in *this County*: It being by no means a Consequence, because *Abuses* are not altogether the same as represented, that therefore there are none at all, or none worthy of Redress. On the contrary, I think there is sufficient Matter to require it in this Case of *Marking* and *Branding*; and indeed vastly more than I apprehended, before my Notice was particularly excited by the late Remonstrances of Manufacturers against it. I mean chiefly *injudicious Branding*; which I observe to be surprisngly great and frequent too, *i. e. upon very improper Parts of the Fleece*; and which the Complainants had no Need to have imputed to a sordid Avarice or Fraud in the Growers; for granting it to be mere *Folly*, it is not less injurious, nor less a fit Object of *Prevention by Law*. Accordingly, from whatever Motive proceeding, *this Evil* not only merits a Remedy, but hath in my Opinion, a competent, and very easy one; which I shall take the Liberty of mentioning.

But,

But, first, having gone some Length, and without straining a single Point, in denying the *Charge of excessive Marking*, for *any Reason whatsoever*, as a *general Practice in Lincolnshire*, I shall observe somewhat for the Veracity, nevertheless, of those Manufacturers who spoke before the *Honourable Committee*, with Regard to *this County*; whose Testimony tho' I have, in one View, discredited; yet, to do *them* Justice, I admit the Truth of it in another: So that in the End, *we* shall be found to differ chiefly, in accounting for the same Thing, different Ways.

It was one of *their* Positions, "that more
 " *Pitch and Tar* had been used in Branding
 " Sheep,* for *Seven Years* past, than for-
 " merly." And this, though true, yet, I think, is to be accounted for, in the main, as follows:

* *Report*, p. 17, 19.

There had been, within the Period mentioned, *a great Increase* of Sheep ; and by far the *greatest*, on *Fens*, and other *Commons*, through a Series of dry Summers, and some very favourable Winters. And such being Places, where is most Reason for Branding, 'tis no Wonder, that upon a *Medium*, Manufacturers had found more Waste of *this Kind*, than at some Time foregone, when Sheep *so depastured*, were fewer in *Proportion*.

Further, these *Commons*, and *Fens*, are (beyond what is the Case of *Pastures*) liable to *Rots*,* such as sweep away in a Manner the whole Stock of Sheep there. After which they are, at first, but scantily repl-

* Nothing of this having happened for twelve Years successively ; while in about thirty preceding I can reckon up ten several *Rots* at the fewest ; some of them indeed more general than others ; in which, though innumerable *Pastures* shared in the Loss, yet were not they upon the whole so much and so often affected, as *Fens* and other *Commons*.

nished, and, in a great Measure, with quite other *Kinds* of Sheep, from dry Forests, and barren, mountainous, or hilly Parts of the Kingdom ; *which Sheep* afford a different Wool from what these *Fens* and *Commons* have produced of late Years.* But they being naturally good Land ; apt to produce Wool ; and Stock-Masters, in order to change the Breed, providing themselves with proper *Rams* ; by these Means the *Staple* is improved in a few Years, from *short Clothing*, to *long Combing Wool* ; not to be distinguished from much grown in *Pastures*, otherwise than by *Marks* and *Brands* ; which, for Reasons already given, are indispensably necessary. This is one Way of accounting for more Waste, by *Pitch* and *Tar*, from *Combing Wool* especially, of late Years, than at certain Times heretofore

Moreover (which makes still more for the Testimony given on this Head, even in Regard to some *Pasture Wool*, the very best) such had been dry parching Seasons of several Summers successively, within the Period witnessed, that, I am well assured,
many

many Grafiers, renting *Sheep-Pastures* of the highest Value *per Acre*, with Right of Common, in Respect of their *Townships*, upon very large *Fens*, had, not because the same were firm and fruitful, but merely for want of Pasturage, much against their Inclinations, been obliged to drive down almost their whole choice Stock of Sheep to the lowest Parts of *those Fens* (at other Seasons under Water) and there to keep them for several Months, till by Rains falling, their *Pastures* became fit to receive them back. And on these Occasions * it has been held

* *As likewise on others that are similar ; which by Means of dry Seasons, for one Cause, and on Account of the Distemper among Cattle obliging to new Methods, for another, have obtained latterly more than usual. And these Things I have chose to mention ; being informed that Two at least of the Four Manufacturers, who gave their Testimony in regard to this County, are furnished with much Wool from that particular Angle of it, to which I have here alluded. And here I think it but Justice to observe further, for Lincolnshire, on this Head, as likewise Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, that a Third Evidence touching the Pasture, or Combing Wools thereof, has confined his Complaints only to the Article of Inwinding, without a single Word of Pitch and Tar Marks. (See Report, pag. 15, 16. Mr John Hustler.)*

a Matter

a Matter of Neceffity *always*, to give a *Brand extraordinary*. And I do imagine it muft have been from Observations to be made of this Kind, that Manufacturers, not knowing, or at leaft not confidering the *Caufe*, have formed a *wrong Conclusion* about *some Pasture Wool*. For though in this laft Cafe there was properly an *accumulated Marking*, yet, in the whole, not *truly excessive*; nor was it *for the Sake of increafing the Weight of the Fleece*. A Wafte hereby there was, but not a voluntary one; for that it is highly proper to avoid; efpecially, if, as it hath been fuggelted, the Nation is liable to a *Want of Wool*. And it is a ftronger Reason for uſing *Pitch and Tar* in the moſt ſparing and prudent Manner that is poſſible, ſince in their Conſequences they are found ſo detrimental to *Goods manufactured*. I inquire then

2dly, *What are the fitteſt Expedients in Regard thereof?*

The Detriment hereby to Manufacture, is in Part attributed to the *Winding up* of thoſe Marks in the Fleece: Wherefore it hath
been

been proposed that *Growers should clip them off*. And on this Head it has been hoped, " that an Apprehension of its subjecting " [*them*] to any trifling Trouble or In- " convenience, will not be deemed a suf- " ficient Argument against it."* Which undoubtedly it should not; providing nevertheless that those mentioned for such, are indeed not considerable, but trifling. However, before we examine *these* fully, let us see how likely are the Means proposed, to obtain the End wanted; which is, to avoid *Tar Spots*, save *Expence*, and *Waste*.

According to present Practice, *some Part* of the Mark (it seems) " escapes the strict- " est Search and Notice of Manufactu- " rers;" so that " being wrought up in " Goods, they are stained and damaged."† Hereupon, I observe, it is not the grosser, and more visible Parts that do *this Hurt*, but the smaller and less perceivable.|| If then

* *Reasons, &c. p. 3.*

† *Reasons, &c. p. 2.*

|| *Report, p. 9.*

these Marks are to be *clipped off, before winding* ; by whom must that Operation, commonly speaking, or at least very often, be performed ? Not by the Owner of the Sheep, or by the Persons who affixed the Brands, but by the *Sheerers* or *Woolwinder*, which Servants are not likely to use equal Care, or indeed to have the same Skill in this Work, with the professed Manufacturer. THEY will be apt, thro' Haste or Ignorance, either to take off *too much* of the Wool, and thereby increase, instead of lessening the Waste ; or to leave *some Part* of the Mark, though not very perceivable. And what shall be *so left*, will be possible Matter for Dispute and Strife ; and, in that Case, *a very great Inconvenience* : Also it will be more likely to escape the *manufacturing Searcher's Notice* ; as in Course it will ; and if Expence is to be saved in that Article, *must* become less strict under this Regulation, than in the present State of Things : And thus Manufacture would not be *less* liable to *Stain* and *Damage* than before.

But

But whereas, on the other hand, a great Share of the present Inconvenience is said to arise from this Marking being *broke* and *separated* by the *Force used in Winding* ; and a great Part of the Remedy proposed, by obliging to *clip it off before Winding*, is expected from Growers not branding more than is absolutely necessary : I think it is very easy to shew how the *one* may be *prevented*, and the *other effected*, without in-joining *this particular Measure*.

As to *Trouble* or *Expence* alledged, and *Waste* ; granting that whoever hath the same (whether it is the Grower or last Buyer) will be paid for it : *Inconvenience* is the Thing principally to be regarded ; and here (besides what hath been already mentioned, of possible Disputes about its being done perfectly, or not) is to be considered, how far it might be an *Incouragement* and a *Screen* to *Sheep-stealers*. A Propensity to this Crime, we may remember, induced the Legislature, not many Years since, to make the Punishment of it *Capital*. By any Means, therefore, to increase such Pro-

C 2
penalty,

penfity, would be, in fome Meafure, *to defeat the Intention of that Law,*

It has been complained of to Parliament, and fo refolved, “ That great Abufes are
 “ practifed in the Winding up of Wool for
 “ Sale, by wrapping up in the Fleeces,
 “ Dirt, Dung, Sand, and other Rubbifh,
 “ to increafe the Weight.”* And who
 that are capable of practifing fuch enormous
 Deceits, would fcruple the Villainy of *Sheep-*
ftaling too, if they could do it under like
 Coverture, and with an equal Chance of Im-
 punity ?

Let me fuppofe a Cafe not unfrequent,†
 of an honeft Sheep Owner miffing a Part of
 his Flock, when the Time of Sheering is
 near at Hand ; who fufpecting the fame to
 be ftolen, goes in Queft of them, and af-
 ter much tracing, finds certain Sheep newly
 fhorn, which, from feveral Tokens, he has

* *Report, p. 22.*

† *By not unfrequent, I mean that of Sheep-ftaling ; not of discovering the Thief in fuch Cafe ; for that is nothing fo frequent ; although there is feldom a County Affize, without one or more being convicted of this Crime.*

Reason to think his own, is morally persuaded that they are ; but as a cautious Person does not chuse to swear it positively, without some concurrent Proofs — he obtains a Warrant therefore from a *Justice of the Peace*, to search, where he suspects, for the Wool ; and having first described his *own Marks*, goes along with the *Constable* ; and finding such Fleeces as he judges his Sheep capable of having produced — if, upon examining the same, *his Marks* appear, then that becomes plain and clear to himself and others, which before was somewhat doubtful — OR, if it be found that the *Marking* or *Brands* have been *clipped off* from Parts before described (for that, I am told, is a Matter, generally speaking, to be discerned) in such Case, the Person in whose Custody the Fleeces are found, is in a Manner, self-condemned. — Nay, according to what the present Usage is, if Traces of *Marking so clipped off*, should appear, tho' on different Parts of Fleeces from those which had been described ; still the Person claiming Property in those Fleeces, would suffer in the Opinion of his Neighbours, as a *Sheep-stealer* ; although not of those particular

ticular Sheep, in Reference to which the Search was made : * While, upon the Foot of the proposed Regulation, *every Stealer of Sheep*, provided he once gets them shorn, would, so far, be in equal Case with the honest Man who buys or breeds *his*.

To convince the Reader that I have not been supposing an *Improbability*, I shall give an Instance of a Person, in one Night, but a few Years since, stealing from two contiguous Parishes, about one † hundred good Sheep, newly washed in order for Sheering ; and driving them to his own Habitation, at the Distance of ten or twelve Miles ; for which Fact he suffered Death at *Lincoln*. He had not indeed shorn them ; but was preparing to do it ; and would have executed his Design, had he not been

* For thus it often happens to Persons of a suspicious Character, that they are detected of some other Villainy, than is the immediate Cause of a Search Warrant.

† In which Number, though belonging to several Persons, was included almost the whole Flock of one industrious small Farmer ; by which he was upon the Point of being utterly ruined.

apprehended

apprehended the Day before. And if he had shorn them, 'tis great Odds whether the Sheep could have been challenged, without some Aid from the Fleeces. That he was detected, so soon at least, was owing to the uncommon Number he had taken ; which giving greater Alarm to the Owners, quickened their Inquiries and Pursuit ; and rendering him more readily suspected, contributed not a little to his Discovery in the very Nick of Time. And, notwithstanding *he had not shorn them* ; yet, provided he had got the *Marks and Brands clipped off*, in consequence of *A Law*, by which the same had become frequent and commendable, 'tis very possible, in such Case, that the Owners might *not have found them* ; because of *lost Sheep* a primary Characteristic is, the *Marking* ; which being amoved, other lesser Tokens of Distinction have a Chance to be over-looked. — Nay, in a lesser Number, which is more frequently the Case, this would be very likely to happen.

And this may suffice to shew how practicable, in some particular Places especially, at so critical a Conjunction (between, or any Thing

Thing near the Time of Washing and Sheering) is the Crime of *Sheep-stealing*; likewise the Possibility of making it *more so*. And as it is no *slight Inconvenience*, or *trifling Trouble*, with *Expence* besides, that an honest Person is liable to sustain in that Case: So, without a better Prospect of the desired Advantage from *clipping off the Marks*, than to me appears, I think, a Step of that Nature and Tendency, should not be taken. However, this being certainly one principal Objection, I leave it to be well considered; desiring to observe further, that though we know what is the present State of the Kingdom in Regard to *Sheep-stealing*, yet there is no saying how far it might be extended under any *new Circumstance* that should *remarkably favour it*.

And *this* is in a Degree, like that of *removing Land-marks*. It would certainly be an Opening for Thieves; of which, as possibly they might take Advantage, so not improbably, or rather *most probably* they would. The *Policy of it* may be compared, in some Sort, to a Person's keeping his Cash under a *strong Lock*; but otherwise so ill secured, that

that an artful wicked Servant hath it in his Power, at certain Opportunities, to extract one Piece after another, without Discovery, unless taken in the Fact. For as one Piece of Money is like another of the same Kind, so, *very often*, is one *new-shorn* Sheep ; and *A Fleece*, with the *Marks clipped off*, is *always* too like some other under the *same Circumstances*, to be challenged at all. — Nay, two *unshorn* Sheep, with the *Marks clipped off*, are frequently too much alike to be readily distinguished — So that instead of obliging Growers to this, I rather think they should not be permitted ; however not encouraged to do it. For, harmless as the Expedient might be in a Multitude of Instances, insomuch as to have *no* ill Consequence for the more Part, in one View ; and although in another, it should have *some* good and useful Effect ; yet cannot that be deemed a reasonable Institution of this Kind, which does not sufficiently respect those particular *Tracts of Country* (I mean the spacious *Fens* and *Commons* of *Lincolnshire* especially) which, as Places where *Branding* is most used, and where indeed, beyond all others, it is most necessary, are consequently
the

the chief Objects of a Law for regulating that Usage ; and therefore ought to be principally considered in it. Now of these *Fens* and *Commons* particularly, I will be bold to say, that *obliging Growers to clip out ALL Pitch and Tar-Marks*, is, in Effect, to *forbid the Use of them*, notwithstanding their allowed Needfulness, both for *distinguishing* and *securing Property*.

But why do I say, *allowed Needfulness* ? since that is a Matter controverted, and the *suppos'd Necessity* represented at the best, as a mere *Vulgarism* of the *English* ; to whom it is recommended in this Case to learn *sheer Sense* from the School of *Ireland*, where (we are told) notwithstanding the vast *open Tracts* of Country, Pitch and Tar for the Purpose of marking Sheep, are not used at all, or but very little. Now whether thus much is *gratis dictum*, or not, is neither very easy to be known, nor very material. For if *Example* in one Place, were a certain *fit Rule* for another, this Recourse to the *Irish* would not be necessary ; because there are Instances sufficient in *England*, of Sheep, either not marked at all with Pitch and Tar,
or

or but very little; and that too in *open Tracts* of Country, But besides, and beyond this, there is a Circumstance to be observed, which in stating the Affair, hath been either over-looked or omitted ; namely, that of *promiscuous Depasturage*, on *Commons* in *England*, which are very numerous and vastly extensive ; where a Multitude of different Owners *breed and feed their Sheep together*. And THIS is the *grand Reason*, and an *indispensable* one, for branding with Pitch and Tar, in order to *distinguish* one Man's Property from anothers ; the same being so *intermixt*, that without THIS MARKING, or some *equivalent Composition* not yet invented, there could be nothing but *Confusion* and *Uncertainty*.

Yet still methinks I hear it said ; admitting the Necessity, in *certain Places*, and in *some Degree*, of using Pitch and Tar Marks, why should not the Grower be obliged to *clip them off*, since the *so doing* seems a Remedy quite natural and easy ? OR if *that* is not the proper Expedient ; what is ?

I an-

I answer, 1st, (besides the bad Consequences already urged, from giving generally into such a Practice) THIS in the whole is *not easy*; but the *Reverse*; and, (more than that) *impossible*. There is, its true, no Difficulty in clipping off a Brand that is *recent enough* to be *conspicuous*. And I do observe, that every Advocate for this Measure *affects* to speak of it, as if ALL of them *were so* at the Time of Sheering. And to clip off *such*, it must be confessed, would to a *Sheep-stealer*, be extremely convenient, provided he could do it without incurring the *least Suspicion*. BUT, except on *Fens* and *other Commons*, there are comparatively *very few* Brands on Sheep *recent*, or in *any Degree conspicuous at the Time of sheering*. And IF, as is far from being unusual, for divers Reasons, there shall have been, within the Course of a Year; MORE than ONE upon the same Sheep, at *different Times*, by *different Owners*; SOME of them will be so little discernable, as to make it, I think I may say, *impossible* for any other than a Person, whose Province it shall be to
break

break the Fleece and search the Wool (in a very good Light) to clip the same out * *so perfectly*, as either to answer fully the Purposes of Manufacture, or to avoid all Occasion of Cavil and Dispute between the Grower, and Buyer.

I think, I may well call it an *Impossibility*, for Growers (as is proposed to be required of them) to free the Fleece entirely from Pitch and Tar ; to make the same (in

* *And here Note, that altho' some Waste is certainly incurred, even by the Remains of obliterated Brands, yet is not the Weight of the Fleece thereby scarce at all increased. And indeed Growers besides, branding Sheep on particular Occasions, which they purpose not to shear: This may tell Manufacturers that however certain they are of increased Waste by Marking, they may sometimes at least mistake in assigning the Reasons of it. On the other Hand, it is a Lesson for Growers to avoid branding, so far as possibly they can ; since it is a Means of spoiling, and in course wasting some Wool ; and as it may happen, without gaining any Thing in Weight, but in Fact losing ; because for all experienced, and consequently thenceforth expected Waste, Manufacturers will, and justly may consider themselves, as they do for Carriage, or any other Expence incident to the Business.*

that

that Respect) *thoroughly clean and neat* ;* since we have been told it is “ apt to escape “ the strictest Search and Notice of Manufacturers themselves.” And why ? Because it is often dissipated, or expanded, uncertainly. Which last, especially would be the very Case, of *old Marks*, of *Brands unrecent and obliterated*, with a vast Number of Sheep Owners, at the Time of Sheering. For here, instead of that *partial* reasoning which hath been handed about upon this Topic, as if Circumstances were in every Instance the same ; or as if different ones made no Alteration in the Nature and Reason of the Thing, it is necessary to consider that the *Surface* of a Sheep, new shorn (when commonly they are branded, if at any Time) is very small, compared with the same in a full grown Fleece ; that, of a Lamb in *June*, it is far less than what it will be, twelve Months after ; and, of any growing Sheep, is greatly increased, between the Time of its be-

* *The Complaints of the Manufacturers, &c.* p. 14.
ing

ing new shorn, and the next Sheering; also, of every One that is full grown, but lean, when shorn and branded, after it hath been a Year in fattening. Suppose then, a Pitch-brand upon each of these in *June*; which at the First is one *connected Mark*, like a *Seal of Wax*: In such Case, the Carcase and the Wool both, growing; and these Marks rising with the Extremities of the Fleece that is expanding continually to a *larger Surface*, they are, from their *united State*, distended and divided into *Parts*, more and more; of which, the Weather wearing and wasting *them all*; taking off *some*; and Accidents, *others*; the *Figure* is impaired by Degrees; and at Length, destroyed, altho', upon a nice Examination, in breaking the Fleece especially, some Remains will be found, of Pitch-brands; and as to Tar-marks, though they are commonly reputed the more innocent of the Two, and are certainly the least Conspicuous, after a while; yet am I credibly informed, that the same will not wholly wear out, from one Sheering to another,

another, but that they adhere, to the last ; notwithstanding that, the Colour fading, they cannot in process of Time be readily distinguished upon the Sheeps Back, from the other outside Parts of the Fleece, which by the Weather and Soil together, are always tarnished, more or less.

This being the Case, that numerous, useful Body of *Grasiers* particularly, who buy in a large Share of their Sheep, from various *Breeders*, the *Spring* before, cannot possibly undertake, *at Sheering*, to clip out *all* the Pitch and Tar-marks, which may have been put upon those Sheep necessarily, some at one Time ; some at another, just as Occasion required. Consequently, under the very hard Terms proposed (*like that of being obliged to make Brick without Straw*) THEY, and *others too*, far from venturing to sell their Produce, could not safely expose it to Sale ; lest there should be espied upon it some *Fragment* of Pitch or Tar-mark, which (as very well it might) had escaped the Growers, or his Servants Notice.

Now

Now, altho' the Manufacturers intend not to carry Matters so far : Yet would they do well to consider (or at least I hope *others* will) that, as the Law cannot *effect* : so it ought not to *injoin* Impossibilities. But admitting it to be impossible without Dispute, as in innumerable Instances of a *like Nature*, I verily think it (and think also I have plainly shewn) for Growers *so perfectly* to clip out *all* Brands and Marks from the Fleece, as to warrant the same thoroughly clean and neat, *i. e. wholly* free from Pitch and Tar ; *that* Consideration alone is a sufficient Objection ; although it were no Way improper, in another Regard already mentioned, for every of them indiscriminately (howsoever they obtain their Sheep) to do their utmost towards it : BECAUSE *No Law*, in such Case, would be able to distinguish between a Person's using his *best* Endeavours ; or *less* ; or *next to none at all* : In short, to fix *any Medium*, whereon to rest its Sanctions, between *doing*, or *not doing* the same Thing.

D

But

But, 2dly, although the Practice of *Marking* and *Branding* with *Pitch* and *Tar* is ancient ; and they are cheap Materials ; for the latter (so far as Growers are at present informed) *peculiarly* useful : Yet does it not follow, but that some other Ingredients might prove equally so, and not alike chargeable with the two Inconveniences, of *certain Waste*, and *possible Damage*. And as it does not appear that much Invention hath hitherto been employed that Way : So it were to be wished, that some Thought was taken towards finding out a *Composition*, which would answer the End of *Pitch* and *Tar* in *Branding* ; which would admit of a *distinct Impression*, or Figure, such as to abide the Weather, and withal give Way to Soap in warm Water ; so as to be fully discharged, without leaving any Stain, or other Injury upon Wool, to affect Manufacture. This being once compassed, the Use of *Pitch* and *Tar* for *that* Purpose, *might be wholly discarded by Law*.

But, as to effect so much (which I am willing to hope is not impossible) may require

quire some Time, and many Experiments ; and as it would be an *extreme Hardship*, before that is done, to lay the Growers under a Necessity of disusing *what only*, they know by Experience, does answer their Purpose : So, in the mean while, what *Rules* and *Cautions* in this Regard, Growers would be likely to observe, were they themselves the Manufacturers of their own Wool : THOSE, could they be defined with any Exactness or Certainty, if good Policy *did not*, the Law *might* very well oblige *them* to. And although different Circumstances require very different Measures of *this Kind* ; yet am I perswaded that, for the present, the main Grievances complained of, do by a very easy Regulation, admit of considerable *general* Redress, *viz.*

1. By confining all Brands to the Buttocks or hinder Legs:

2. By limiting those Brands (on grown Sheep) to the Compass of Inches Diameter (on Lambs before Michaelmas) to one Half, or at the most, two Thirds of that Compass.

D 2

3. By

3. *By inhibiting the Use of Pitch or Tar, in all other Marking thought proper to be put on Sheep or Lambs, either ordinarily, or occasionally.*

For this last (*Marking*, as distinguished from *Branding*) there is no Plea of Necessity, to justify the Use of either *Pitch* or *Tar*; several other more innocent Ingredients will, in all Regards, answer *that Purpose* full as well. And whereas many, it is observed, (I had even said, most Persons, on *Commons*) through astonishing Ignorance, or Carelessness, *brand* their Sheep on the *Shoulder*, *Ribs*, or *Flank* (any one of which is improper on a double * Account); all that, and consequently what Manufacturers do with *most Reason* complain of, under this Head, will be avoided.† And whereas some Persons

* 1st, *Because these are the best Parts of the Fleece: 2^{dly}, In the course of Winding, those Parts are much distended, and the Marking broke and separated, as Manufacturers truly complain.*

† *Because the Buttock or hinder Leg is not only one coarsest Part of every Fleece; but of some, which otherwise*

sons (*on Commons*) not a few, indeed, make Use of *larger Brands*, than can be thought absolutely necessary, *this Impropriety* also will be prevented. — Not that the same Dimensions are sufficient in every Place alike. For where * Sheep are apt to be scabbed, and to pluck their Wool, and leave it (through Poverty weak and loose) on Hedges, Thickets, and Furz; *there*, a small Brand will very often be too much disfigured, to answer its End.

wife are fine Wool, very coarse; *moreover*, a Brand there, is not liable, in winding, to be much, or scarce at all distended, or broke, and intermixed with other Parts of the Fleece.

* Which is the Case of all Commons.



POSTSCRIPT.

IF, after having dwelt long upon *the Article* of Marking and Branding, I could not see Reason to commend *that Measure*, for preventing Abuses and their consequential Injuries, which the Manufacturers are *eager* to carve out for themselves: Yet cannot *they* deny that the Regulations pointed to, would afford them infallibly a very substantial Redress; such as, I perswade myself, impartial considerate Persons, who have any Knowledge in this Way, will think might well enough content them; provided a reasonable Security on this Head, is in Truth *THEIR sole Aim*; and *THEY* are not complaining of *one Thing only* that is sufficiently

ently specious ; while, in Reality, THEY have their Eye also upon *another*, not so well to be avowed: To speak plainly: IF, besides seeking *Relief*, THEY are not, over and above *that*, intending *Oppression* ; of which, from the Beginning, I was not without a Suspicion, that, since my writing what has gone before, hath not been lessened ; but on the contrary, greatly increased. And *therefore*, I think it incumbent on me to examine more narrowly than I have yet done, that *primary Position* of THEIRS, which is made the Foundation and Chief Corner Stone of a *dark under-ground Contrivance*, as I conceive. Which Position is, “ That the
 “ Growers repeat their Branding, ONLY
 “ TO INCREASE THE WEIGHT OF THE
 “ FLEECE ; and for NO OTHER REASON.”

They have, in short, represented the whole Body of Grasers and Farmers throughout the Kingdom, or at least the *Bulk* of them, as conspiring *most uniformly*, within *seven or eight* Years last past, to bestow a DOUBLE PORTION of Pitch and Tar, upon their Sheep, as well in *Pastures*, as on *Commons* ;
 for

for the Sake of Selling the same, as *Wool*; and by Reason of its latterly advanced Price. This THEY have affirmed to be THE TRUE STATE OF THEIR CASE. And an united Cry, to that Effect, from several *Clothing Counties*, has been obtruded upon the Public, for an *indubitable Testimony*.

Now an *united Cry*, in the Name of *Woolen Manufacturers*, is a particular Kind of Currency, that, with me (who have had the disproving of *many such*) will not always pass for *Sterling Truth* ——— I have indeed hitherto only undertook to answer, as to the Point in Question, for *Lincolnshire*; and positively, for only the *Pasture Wool* there grown, that, *so far* this THEIR *State of the Case* IS NOT TRUE. And thus much I do again affirm; and that the same might be proved incontestably; as also, that the Amount of such Wool, a large Part of it, without *any Pitch or Tar Marks*, the rest with very little, and that applied chiefly at the *Sheering only*, is MANY THOUSAND PACKS a Year. But, moreover, in Regard to the *Fens* and other *Commons of Lincolnshire*; considering that if the Manufacturers
most

most grievous Charge was true, it must be so in one of these *two* Respects, *viz.* Either, First, because the Growers had, within *seven* or *eight* Years past, fallen *generally* into a Method of Branding *oftener*, that is, at *more* Times, in the Space of a Year, than *before*, they had been accustomed to do : OR, 2dly, had, within *that Period*, provided themselves *generally*, with *new* Instruments for Branding ; and *those* considerably *larger* than their *old Ones* ; neither of which, after such Inquiry as I have been able to make, appearing to be *Fact* : I thence conclude, with Regard to *Lincolnshire*, that *these Things* ARE NOT so — And, considering the Matter still further, am of Opinion, *they are* NO WHERE, *credible*.

HEREIN, I govern myself by *the Nature of the Thing* (which is a pretty certain Guide) seeing that Growers cannot rationally propose to themselves *any Advantage*, to make it *worth their doing* ; as will be thus evident. Where, of all Places, Branding is most frequent ; that is, *repeated most often*, the Method, so far as I can learn, is *three Times a Year* ; *viz.* 1. at *Sheering* ; 2. about the
Month

Month of *October* or *November* ; 3. in or about the Month of *April*. And, of these, the *first* (I am credibly informed, nay have been convinced in some Measure by my own Eyes) disappears to all common outward Observance, before the next Sheering, as if it had never been ; and the *last only* is discernible enough at Sheering, to be *certainly* clipped out ; or which (whatever Waste *each* may occasion) *can* give any significant Weight to the Fleece ; whereof, even *that also* will have lost something.

To compute then ; the Price of *A Stone of Pitch* (which suffices, at once, for Branding *many* Sheep) is 1 s. 4 d. This multiplied by 3, makes *Four Shillings*. — But, for *every Stone* thus spent, I am further told, there is nothing near *that Weight* added to the Fleece, even in the first Instance ; because, not only in the *Apparatus* a Share evaporates in a very thick Smoke : but another, still larger, is continually lost upon the Ground between the Furnace and every individual Sheep *to be* branded. Besides, a Multitude of Growers branding *only once* ; viz. at Sheering : Others, not a few, but
twice

twice (and the last of those *two Times* in or about *November*) I am, from all these Considerations put together, morally convinced, that upon an Average, (let Persons brand how they will, in all the several Methods mentioned ; that is, in a greater or a lesser Degree ; provided they do it each Time in the *same Degree*) Every Stone Weight added ultimately, (*i. e.* to the Fleece in the Scale,) by Means of *Pitch Brands*, does not stand the Farmers in less than *Five Shillings* (to speak within Compass) over and above their Labour in putting it on ; leaving which (as it is *ordinarily* done) to be computed at Discretion, I submit the Growers *Profit* in like Manner ; and, remembering that the *most Branding* is always to be found upon the *lowest priced Wool*, if *this* shall be thought Nothing ; or not any Thing considerable : I submit it to be judged still further, what *can be* the Share of *that Profit* arising to any one Person from the *advanced Price* of WOOL ? which is the supposed *sole Inducement*. And, if *this*, at last, be found inconsiderably small, whether very gross Practices are likely to prevail commonly and generally, for very little Ends. — I go still farther,

farther, and say : was it true, as represented, that Growers did, at any Time, or Times, *repeat Branding without Occasion*, and for NO OTHER REASON, than to *increase the Weight of the Fleece to the Buyer* ; even that would answer NO END AT ALL ; because it being (I insist upon it) ONLY on *Commons* and *common Fens*, where *Branding* is used to any such Degree, as *can* give the *least Colour* for an Accusation of this Kind : Consequently, if that Accusation is true, the respective Owners *there*, must have the *extraordinary* Trouble of *selecting* their *several* Flocks *promiscuously* depasturing, *far* and *widely* dispersed among *many others*, PURPOSELY, and for NO OTHER REASON ; at an Expenditure of Time and Labour, which the *increased Weight* of Wool, by Means of *Pitch Brands*, in some Instances, *would not* compensate ; in others, would afford *very little* Gain ; *not much*, in any ; the necessary Time and Labour in such Case being (the Country Men tell us) *more* than either *Gentlemen* or *Traders*, are perhaps aware of ; notwithstanding that there are those, of BOTH, who have treated this Point, as if *Farmers* (who have always *Business enough* upon

upon their Hands) made no Account of their Time ; or, for Want of honest useful Employment, were apt, at certain Intervals of Leisure, to set themselves, unnecessarily, unjustly, and foolishly, to the *earning of a Penny* (as they might think) BY BRANDING THEIR SHEEP — A Charge too heavy and general ; too ridiculous indeed to be credited ! the *Folly of it especially* considered ; since it is a known Truth, that on Account of *Waste*, occasioned by *Pitch* and *Tar Brands*, some Abatements are made *every where*, in the Price of Wool, so far as the same is discoverable (and it is a Matter not to be concealed) ; and this Abatement, in the *Fens* particularly, is estimated, for the most Part, at about Three Shillings *per Todd* ; of which I could give a very pregnant Proof, from the Mouth of a *Manufacturer*, were that necessary, as I think it is not ; the Thing in general being sufficiently notorious. This, its true, is a considerable Difference *per Pack* ; not to be compensated by the supposed *increased Weight*, according to the *highest Computation* of Manufacturers. Yet the Waste and Trouble extraordinary in searching and cleansing this, beyond other Wool.

Wool of the *same Quality* are, I conceive, what makes that Difference; and which the respective Growers, no Doubt, would gladly avoid, if possible. But Persons who will adventure their Money in *stocking the Fens*, must endure all the Inconveniences attending it. And the much cheaper keeping *there*, than in *Pastures*, of far worse Land, enables them to bear the same, and be Gainers also.

If the Method of computing I have here used, shall be thought too precarious, to overturn a Position seemingly avouched from many Quarters, let the Truth of that Position be tried in another Way, as follows:

Have the *Marking* and *Brands* on Sheep been *generally* increased? and with the *single Intention* of selling Pitch and Tar (much cheaper Commodities) *as* Wool? In that Case, we should, methinks, find Sheep to have been *generally*, or for the *most Part*, branded, rather some little Time before Sheering, than immediately after; because, that done a little before, would add *some Weight* to the Fleece; that, immediately after,

ter, *next to none at all*. But as the former is rarely so, I venture to think it scarce ever practised, without some other very good Reason to be assigned for it.

Again, granting this celebrated Position to be true, it would be natural to find the *greatest Increase* of Marking upon Wool of the highest Price, as that would be selling Pitch and Tar for the *most Money*. But this hath not been said. And if it had, 'tis what almost every Person would have been able to contradict. It being therefore certain, that the Wool most incumbered with Pitch and Tar is of the lowest Price ; either it is so encumbered for a different Reason, than that of *increasing the Weight* ; or it is of the lowest Price, for the Reason of its being so incumbered — So that in the one Case is wanting the *Intention* ; in the other, the *Gain* alledged.

But though (reckoning by the *Pack*) the *most Waste* from Pitch and Tar is not said to be found in the best or highest priced Wool ; Yet hath the *Increase thereof* been charged to be in the same Proportion on the highest,

as on the lowest, *viz.* *Twice* the Quantity of what was usual before the late advanced Price of it. And the same hath been made to be all along; *i. e.* both before the *supposed Increase*, and since, about Half as much in *Pastures*, as on *Commons*. And why Half? Because, I suppose, of *Pasture Sheep*, they reckon, on a Medium, but Half the Number of *Fleeces* to a *Pack*, as from *Sheep* on *Commons*. Be it so. If then Half the Quantity of Pitch and Tar is found in *Pasture*, as on *Common Wool*; thence it will follow that *Sheep in Pastures*, both before and since the pretended general Increase of Pitch and Tar Marks, have been usually marked and branded full *as much*, and *often*, as those on *Commons*. The contrary whereof I dare aver to be notorious; insomuch that upon second Thoughts, this Part of the Charge will not be maintained, but retracted. For *Pasture Sheep* probably never were, in this Century at least, certainly have not been branded in the *same Degree* with those on *Commons*. And, moreover, the Variation latterly, in that Respect hath been, from *more to less*, and to *none at all*; not *e contra*. So much at least I can affirm for *Lincolnshire*,
without

without Partiality, both from the common Voice of the People (as well before as since it became a Matter in Question) and of my own Remembrance and Observation.

Upon the Whole then, I think it demonstrably evident, that in the *general*, nothing of what is alledged on this Head, by the Manufacturers, can be the *Intention* of the *Bulk* at least of Wool Growers; and that, *mean* as those are willing to have them accounted, they are not, cannot be so egregiously *filly*, as with greater Assurance, I think, than Wisdom, THEY have represented them.

And what follows from all this? ONLY, in my Opinion, that the Complainants *have laid their Declaration wrong*; and instead of their unjust Calumny (I am free to call it such, considering how it has been worded) should have said that “ Growers
 “ branding too frequently in a Way to
 “ please themselves: that is, *on improper*
 “ *Parts of the Fleece*, without regarding
 “ Consequences to Manufacturers, THEY
 “ by Means thereof, and the Carelessness of
 E *their*

“ *their own* Servants, were liable to, and
 “ did sometimes suffer Damage in their
 “ *Goods.*” Thus much I am sensible is
 true ; and, in the main, I verily believe,
 THE WHOLE TRUTH. But, IF NOT, it
 is no necessary Consequence, that, for Grow-
 ers to clip out ALL *Pitch* or *Tar*, is the
 proper Remedy : OR, that the alternative
 Expedients, I have mentioned, are not ade-
 quate to the *Evils complained of.*

I shall conclude *this Part* then, with
 protesting, that so far as my little Judg-
 ment tells me, the Demands of Manufactu-
 rers, as they have been specified, touching
Marks and *Brands*, are *needless, unsafe, and*
impracticable ; that the same passed into a
Law, would be a *Trap* and a *Snare* to the
 Growers ; exposing them, on frivolous Pre-
 tences, to vexatious Prosecutions, without
 Number or End ; and that they would
 be a *complete Inhibition* upon *all* Buyers of
 Wool in the Fleece, to sell again in like
 Manner (*and are intended so to be*) and in
 all their Consequences to *Grafiers* and *Far-*
mers, the greatest Hardship that ever yet was
 known to be imposed upon *so large a Body*
 of

of honest Pains-taking, extremely useful, though, many of them, comparatively, poor Persons ; having nevertheless, one or other of them, a *Landlord*, in perhaps every Member of each H—se of P———t ; and in almost every Person of *Distinction* and *Property* throughout the Kingdom besides ; who all deriving a Share of their Affluence and Splendour from the *Sweat of the Country Man's Brow* : As they have not failed in their other Distresses, to shew Bowels of Kindness and Compassion towards such of them particularly as were their immediate Vassals : So it is to be hoped (*this Matter* being once well considered) THEY will unanimously reach forth their Hands to save, and protect them against the rapacious Attempts of their inveterate Antagonists ; for such (notwithstanding their Merit in other Regards) have *Woolen Traders* been to *Wool Growers*, for Ages, and Centuries ; I mean (and I can prove it, have, indeed, *elsewhere*) they have been continually endeavouring to grasp the Wool of *this Kingdom*, upon their own terms altogether. And tho' they have all along had the Artifice to give it out (as on *this Occasion* particularly they affect to

do) that “the Interest of Manufacturers and “ Growers are *inseparably connected*” ; yet does that only remind me of the following homely but apposite Proverb, *viz. When the FOX preaches, GEES E beware !* For so far are the Interests of Growers and Wool-buyers, from being *inseparably connected throughout*, that, in *one very essential Point*, (the *Price*) they *ever were*, and *ever will be*, *unalterably divided*. A Reason why the Legislature should fix a wise and equitable Barrier between them, in *that Respect*, and be a constant Guard to defend the same.

And now I desire to observe, in the last Place, that though I have in my Title Page, and all along made Use of the Word *Manufacturer*, in Compliance with the Common Form of Speaking upon this Occasion ; yet don't I esteem *them*, so far Principals in the Case, as that the Complaints exhibited, can properly be called *theirs* ; much less (*for their own Sakes*) one Part of the Design couched under them. Consequently, instead of being (which they seem) *spontaneous Agents*, I rather look upon them as (what they often have been) *practised upon* by a Class of
of

of People called STAPLERS, who rather chuse to rank along with *them*, than with *Wool Growers*, although they are equally related to, and by their separate Interest, alike inclined to oppress *both*.

Nevertheless, whenever meditating a MONOPOLISH JOBB for *themselves*, they are sure to throw out some alluring Bait that is readily swallowed by *real Manufacturers*: Thus have they frequently had the Address, by engaging *them*, to avail themselves of *their Interest*, and to pass upon the Public for *their Cause alone* (whose of all others is the most popular) what in Truth had something in it, not for *their Advantage*, but the Reverse. Accordingly, this present I hold to be a mixt Affair; neither entirely right, nor wholly wrong; and that the Grievances alledged, are *nec nihil, nec omnino*.

F I N I S.

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BRITAN

